

Every Child Learning Every Day



August 2006

An early childhood newsletter from the State Department of Education — www.sde.state.id.us/dept

Volume 5, Issue 8

READY TO LEARN

Books for August

By Dr. Stan Steiner

Staying active with walks and exploring the environment where you live has many benefits. Here are some books to get you started.

"Get Up and Go!" by Nancy Carlson, 2006, Viking. Nancy Carlson's books

are known for their gentle way of raising awareness to social issues for young

children. This book encourages children to exercise and spend less time watching television.

"Baby Talk: A Book of First Words and Phrases," by Judy Hindley and illustrated by Brita Granstrom, 2006, Candlewick Press. All parents anticipate their child's first word. This delightful book reflects the possibilities and similarities you might experience from your beautiful baby.

"Sleepy Boy," by Polly Kanevsky and illustrated by Stephanie Anderson, 2006, Atheneum. One little boy who spent the day at the zoo has trouble falling asleep at night. After much tossing and turning his father comforts him into relaxation and slumber.

"What Do Wheels Do All Day?" by April Jones Prince and illustrated by Giles Laroche, 2006, Houghton Mifflin. Amazing paper relief art and simple text reflect the theme of wheels in our daily lives. Children can have fun thinking about the different wheels they see on a stroll through their neighborhoods.

Dr. Stan Steiner is the chairman of the Boise State University's Department of Literacy. He can be reached at (208) 426-3962.



Help ease transitions for your child

Dear Reader:

Change can be difficult for young children. One big change is the transition from summertime to school time.

Here are a few ideas for making that change easier.

Attend orientation with your child to help him feel comfortable in the new school. Make sure he knows where his room is, where to go if he feels ill, and where to catch the bus.

If possible, meet your child's teacher. Ask about the best way to stay in contact: notes, phone calls, e-mail, or visits.

If your child's school has a lunch break, talk to your child about healthy eating, likes and dislikes, and how lunches are prepared. Not all "lunch breaks" are at noon, so you'll want to find



Dr. Marilyn Howard
Superintendent of Public
Instruction

out how early or how late your child will be eating. Ask about the school's

dress code, and help your child plan an appropriate outfit for the first day. Buttons, ties and zippers can be challenging and may make it difficult for youngsters to use the bathroom. Pick easily manageable clothing for your child.

Part of a good start is a good rest. Begin enforcing bedtime two to three weeks before school starts to accustom your child to going to bed early and getting up in time for school.

Finally, the first few days in a new environment can be stressful. You can help create a positive attitude about school by sharing some of your favorite memories and encouraging your child to share first school impressions with you.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

"Follow the leader" helps develop locomotor skills

Physical Education Central is a website (www.pecentral.org) where educators and others share lesson plans for activities aimed at different age groups. Below is a preschool activity from that site: "Follow the leader"

Purpose of activity

This activity will give children the opportunity to move in different directions and pathways using a variety of locomotor skills, while building on cooperative play skills used when leading or following a partner.

Description of idea

Conduct the activity in a large indoor or outdoor space with marked boundaries so that children know where they can and cannot move.

Introduce the activity to children by demonstrating the roles of the leader and follower. The

leader's role is to move in different directions and pathways throughout the space while galloping, marching, crawling, etc., and in general trying to challenge the follower to travel in variety of different ways. The follower's role is to attempt to replicate the movements of the leader.

The follower should not get too far behind the leader, and the leader should be asked to slow down if he is getting too far away from his partner.

60 to 90 seconds is sufficient time for a child to be a leader before changing places. Leaders can be changed several times during the activity. A maximum class size of no more than 18 children (9 pairs) should participate in a movement class at one time.

Give children opportunities to discuss and decide who will be

the follower first and who will be the leader. Explain that they will get to take turns being both the leader and follower.

For safety reasons, suggest that they not get closer than two giant steps from each other.

Have children find a spot to sit in with their partners.

Have leaders begin to move about the space using a variety of different locomotor movements.

Tell followers to follow the leaders, copying their "traveling actions." Explain that they can move in different directions (forward, backward, sideways) and pathways (straight, zigzag, curved), as well as use a variety of traveling patterns.



PARENT TIPS

Media campaign to focus on helping parents choose care

Quality child care is the focus of a new media campaign funded by a 2006 Governor's Community Collaboration Grant.

The collaboration includes South Central District Health, Snake River Association for the Education of Young Children and IdahoSTARS.

These partners and their committee found an Idaho CareLine report showing calls from parents in search of child care were highest in May and August.

As a result, the ad campaign consisting of television spots, newspaper ads and bookmarks, is targeted for those two months in Region 5 in southern Idaho.

The 30-second television spot instructing parents to "look, check and ask" for quality when choosing child care was debuted at Idaho AEYC's 20th Anniversary Open House in February.

The Governor's grant will make it possible for the spots to run on two local channels and cable television.

The bookmarks are being developed in time for a back-to-school push and the ads will run in Sunday editions of the local newspaper in each of the two targeted months.

A decision to expand the campaign statewide was due in large part to the excitement created about this project. Susan Beck of IdahoSTARS in Twin Falls wrote, "We are willing to share the resources that the grant has allowed us to create to help this awareness campaign."

IdahoSTARS will fund the Spanish translations that will include radio spots. IdahoAEYC will create a link for *Look, Check, and Ask for Quality* on its website so parents can see and hear the messages online. The Head Start Collaboration Project will provide the DVD and Beta-SP versions to different regions.

NUTRITION

Good nutrition begins with variety

Sometimes being a parent means searching out the right answers to questions that seem pretty simple, such as "What is good nutrition?" According to *Mealtime Memo for Child Care* from the National Food Service Management Institute in Mississippi, "Good nutrition means getting the calories we need for energy and the nutrients we need for proper growth."

Your young children need a balanced diet of a variety of

healthy foods. The key to giving your children a healthy well-balanced diet is to incorporate a variety of foods, such as fruits and vegetables, grains, and protein.

August is the time to serve your young children a variety of fruit and vegetables that are in season! Shop your local farmer's market or grocery market. Produce is plentiful and at its peak this season. Try some broccoli salad with a

little Italian dressing, or some fresh apples cored and sliced with yogurt as a tasty and satisfying dip. Choose bright colored fruits and vegetables because they are full of nutrients and vitamins such as A and C.

By adding a salad or serving fresh fruit as dessert your young children will learn to like these food items and that colorful, fresh food can be good for them as well as appealing to their senses.

SMART STARTS

Help child feel safe, comfortable while you're away

In order to succeed at school, a child must feel comfortable and safe while away from the primary caregiver. Children who are confident and secure away from their parents are more apt to socialize, interact with the teacher, and learn more quickly while at school. You can help your child feel confident and safe with other adults so that he or she is more comfortable on the first day of school.

Birth to 1 year

Allow your baby to spend short amounts of time with a trusted individual with whom your baby feels safe. This could be as short as leaving the room, and then returning in a

few minutes. If one parent works away from the home, be sure to say goodbye each morning, and tell baby that he or she will return that evening, so that baby learns that he or she will return.

1 to 3 years

Schedule play time with other children. Your child will learn to play with other children, and to share your attention with them. You can arrange to meet friends at the park for play dates.

3 to 5 years

Arrange play dates for your child. Rotate the location of the play

dates, so that at least some of the time, the play dates are away from your home. Reinforce the positive aspects, "Today you get to play with your friends!"

Kindergarten skills

Self-confidence to be away from parents and feel safe, ability to play with other children, and ability to follow directions to stay safe.

Books

"First Day Jitters," Julie Danneburg, Charlesbridge Publishing, 2000; "Miss Kindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten" Joseph Slate, Puffin Books; Reprint edition, 2001.

ACTIVITY

Frozen water balloons lead to shape, color discussions

By Jennifer Williams

2002 Idaho Teacher of the Year

Children love balloons and they love water too. On these hot days of summer, fun and creative play can happen in a surprising way with water balloons that have been frozen.

What you will need: Balloons in a variety of shapes and sizes, water sources, cookie sheet or cardboard lined with foil, freezer, large plastic tub or 5 gallon bucket filled with cold water, a turkey baster or eyedropper, and watercolor paints or food coloring in primary colors (yellow, red, and blue)

What to do:

Fill the balloons with water by

hooking them over the sink faucet or nozzle of a hose.

Place the filled balloons on stiff cardboard covered with foil, or a cookie sheet.

Leave the balloons for 1-2 days until they are solid.

Cut the tied end of the balloon and gently remove the balloon.

Place the frozen forms into a tub or bucket of cold water.

Drip watercolor paints, or food coloring, onto the frozen forms.

Gently push the forms or allow them to float freely.

Ask children the following questions: "What shapes do you see?" "What new color do you see when the

yellow form touches the blue form (green)?" "When the red form touches the blue form (purple)?" "When the yellow form touches the red form (orange)?" "Do the shapes and forms look like boats, bugs, or eggs?" "What might happen if salt is dropped on the frozen forms?" and "Why are the forms getting smaller?"

Variations: Use colored water in the balloons. When they have completely frozen, use them to paint with on butcher paper, or the driveway.

Use a variety of other containers to freeze the water (butter containers, plastic food storage bags, ice cube trays, etc.).